

## Hyde County Health Department

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*From the Lodge to the Lighthouse  
We're striving for a healthier Hyde*

*Wesley P. Smith  
Health Director*

## **NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **HYDE WALKS! A Social Walking Program**

#### **Hyde County Health Department wants you to start walking!**

Did you know that walking is the most popular exercise in the U.S. and the world? Also, it is the best way for somebody who is inactive to begin leading a healthy, active lifestyle. It costs nothing and is rated as the most enjoyable type of leisure exercise. So let's get moving! Do you want to make Hyde County a healthy, active and enjoyable place to live?

#### **Walking Leaders Needed In Each Township!**

As a walk leader, you play a very important role in helping to improve the health of Hyde County residents. We are asking that you work with us at the Hyde County Health Department to recruit members to join your walking group. If interested, please contact Liz Mumm, Public Health Educator II, at 252-926-5289 to sign up. Then, you will determine the day or evening that is best for your walking group to meet. As a walk leader you will be in charge of meeting with your group of walkers at least one time each week for a heart pumping, social walk. We hope you will decide to meet for walks twice a week. If so, you will earn a pair of walking shoes!

To assist you as a walk leader we have developed a handbook. In the handbook are the materials you will need as a walk leader. Materials include:

- A walk leader's guide to the **Hyde Walks!** Program.
- A list of suggested goals for your team to strive toward.
- A logbook for you to track participation on your walk team

- A list of prepared walks of varying lengths in the county that you may choose from for your walking group. Please feel free to add additional walking routes that you know and like.
- A list of talking points to share with your group each week to keep them motivated and to continue walking.

## Reasons to walk:

1. **Walking prevents type 2 diabetes.** The [Diabetes Prevention](#) Program showed that walking 150 minutes per week and losing just 7% of your body weight (12-15 pounds) can reduce your risk of diabetes by 58%.

2. **Walking strengthens your heart.** In one study, mortality rates among retired [men](#) who walked less than one mile per day were nearly twice that among those who walked more than two miles per day. [Women](#) in the Nurse's Health Study (72,488 female nurses) who walked three hours or more per week reduced their risk of a [heart attack](#) or other coronary event by 35% compared with women who did not walk.

3. **Walking is good for your brain.** In a study on walking and cognitive function, researchers found that women who walked the equivalent of an easy pace at least 1.5 hours per week had significantly better cognitive function and less cognitive decline than women who walked less than 40 minutes per week. Think about that!

4. **Walking is good for your bones.** Research shows that postmenopausal women who walk approximately one mile each day have higher whole-body bone density than women who walk shorter distances, and walking is also effective in slowing the rate of bone loss from the legs.

5. **Walking helps alleviate symptoms of depression.** Walking for 30 minutes, three to five times per week for 12 weeks, reduced symptoms of [depression](#) as measured with a standard depression questionnaire by 47%.

6. **Walking improves physical function.** Research shows that walking improves fitness and physical function and prevents physical disability in older persons.

The list goes on, but if I continued, there'd be no time for you to start walking! Suffice to say that walking is certainly good for you!

Make walking a priority in your life. Physical activity increases your chances of living for many years. To inquire about our low cost or no cost Social Walking Program in your township, contact Liz Mumm at 252-926-5289.

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